

Americans excited to learn more about their new coverage options. It was a little bumpy, as expected, but no fleeting Web page glitches can distract us from the fact that for the first time millions of uninsured Americans who have lived in dread that an illness or an accident could plunge them into financial ruin will finally have access to good coverage that they can afford.

Today is a dark day here in D.C., but for the thousands of people I represent, a long night is ending. And that's worth celebrating.

ANGELS IN ADOPTION

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 2013 Angels in Adoption, Jessie and Kayci Prince, from my hometown, Plano, Texas.

As children, both Jessie and Kayci were touched by adoption. Having experienced the powerful impact adoption has on families, they decided to adopt one of their own. In 2012, Ezekiel—Zeke for short—from the Democratic Republic of Congo, became part of the Prince family.

As the Princes helped Zeke learn how to read, they quickly learned how challenging it was to find books that depict transracial families.

They decided as a family to write, illustrate, and publish "That's a Yummy Color," a children's book celebrating adoption. This book is now helping other families form special bonds with their own adopted children.

I am grateful for the compassionate families like the Princes.

Jessie and Kayci, you are truly an inspiration. God bless you.

OBAMACARE

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, last week the health insurance marketplace opened, giving millions access to quality health care. Since then, there has been too much focus on the small hiccups that are to be expected when any large program is implemented.

Yesterday, I received a letter from a North Carolina woman who lives over 600 miles from my home district in Illinois. Like many Illinoisans, she believes the positives of the Affordable Care Act are being overlooked. She said:

My family has already benefited from the Affordable Care Act as I have two children just finishing college. I am relieved I can keep them on my medical coverage at no cost. This saves them money and gives me peace of mind. The cost of our health care plan has decreased by \$400.

Like many, she wants to ask Congress: Is this why you shut down the government, to keep me and my chil-

dren from getting affordable health care?

Citizens are sick and tired of the misinformation being spread about the ACA. The ACA didn't cause the shutdown. The shutdown is a symptom of what really ails America—cynicism that allows a few to take hollow ideological stances at the expense of many.

Like me, she wants us to pass a clean CR and end this shutdown today.

MR. PRESIDENT: THIS IS OUR LAND

(Mr. SMITH of Missouri asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, President Obama must stop playing politics with our National Park System. The parks belong to every American and should not be held hostage in President Obama's political game.

In the 1960s, the Federal Government established the Ozark National Scenic Riverways in south central Missouri under the guise of protecting the rivers and forests for all Missourians. Some 50 years later, President Obama is taking away our access. The riverways do not belong to President Obama. They belong to my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama is working to make his shutdown as painful as possible. The President has barricaded parks and monuments across the country, including the open-air World War II Memorial in Washington. It costs more money to barricade the monuments than it would to leave them open.

The national parks do not belong to President Obama. The parks belong to every American. It's time for President Obama to open our national parks. It's time for President Obama to stop playing politics with our parks.

MONEY AND POLITICS

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, this government shutdown has clearly demonstrated our democracy is not working the way it was designed. Unfortunately, this is largely due to the oversized influence and obscene amount of money in politics which continue to fuel our distorted political process, and it could get worse.

Today, the Supreme Court is hearing arguments in the McCutcheon case, the second-coming of Citizens United. This case could open the door to even more money flooding our political process. Money and politics have paralyzed Washington and have paralyzed my Republican colleagues' will to compromise. They would be more apt to compromise if they were not absolutely petrified of the Koch brothers spending millions of dollars to unseat them.

We cannot afford to have a system of government fueled by money that re-

wards confrontation and condemns compromise. If we don't fix this underlying problem, money and politics, we will continue to lurch from crisis to crisis, and the American people ultimately lose.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

(Mr. STUTZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, back home, Hoosiers know that we only solve problems by sitting down and talking. Unfortunately, President Obama and Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID refuse to join Republicans in the constructive, respectful dialogue that Washington desperately needs. Eight days ago, Senate Democrats shut down the government by refusing four separate House-passed bills to fund the government.

It's clear that the American people don't want this shutdown, and it's exactly why the House has passed nine bipartisan, commonsense bills to fund and reopen parts of government that we all agree on.

Together, House Republicans and House Democrats have passed bills to ensure that the National Guard is paid, veterans' benefits are funded, and our national parks are reopened. Unfortunately, these common-ground solutions are gathering dust in the Senate as HARRY REID refuses to come to the table and talk.

The American people don't expect Republicans and Democrats to agree on everything, but they do expect us to talk. It's time for Senate Democrats to put aside their obstructionism and come to the table.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, the truth is out. Republican leaders and their big donors have been planning this shutdown for over 2 years. Why? They claim it's because of ObamaCare, but it's now clear to everyone that it is plainly and simply about Obama.

He won re-election, and they still can't deal with it, so they're willing to hurt their own constituents and the entire country just to try to keep our President from doing the job he was overwhelmingly elected to do.

The American people should be outraged and demand that this shutdown end now and that Congress lift the debt ceiling, pay our bills, and protect the good faith and credit of our Nation.

The good news is that even some Republicans are sick and tired of these childish, destructive tactics. They, like us Democrats, want to put our Federal workers back to work, to make sure they and those depending on Social Security will be paid, that all veterans

receive the services we owe them, that vulnerable women and children can get the care they need, and that our Nation will continue to remain strong.

So the American people must demand that Speaker BOEHNER bring the clean CR to the floor for a vote today. If he doesn't, then they must insist that their Representatives stand up for this country and our fellow Americans by stepping up and signing a discharge petition to end the madness.

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NEGOTIATION

(Mr. KLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves 1 week into a government shutdown. That's something I hoped I would never have to say on the floor of this House. I did not want this; House Republicans did not want this; and the American people surely did not want this.

So why are we here? We're here because Democrats in the United States Senate and the President of the United States refuse to negotiate with the people's elected Representatives here in the House.

How long can their refusal to negotiate go on? All we are asking for is a conversation, Mr. Speaker. That's it. House Republicans want to sit down in good faith and work to get this government open again and to make sure that all Americans are treated fairly under the President's health care law.

My colleague from Indiana, just moments ago, pointed out that we pass bills in this House with overwhelming majorities—margins of over 100 votes, bipartisan votes—to keep important, essential services up and running. There are grounds for agreement. We just have to negotiate.

Leader REID, Mr. President, let's talk.

IMPACTING AMERICA'S YOUNGEST LEARNERS

(Mr. HINOJOSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the government shutdown and its detrimental impact on Federal programs like Head Start and Impact Aid for school districts.

Instead of punishing our youngest learners through this government shutdown, our Nation needs a responsible, forward-looking fiscal policy that repairs the damage done by sequestration and the government shutdown and that allows programs like Head Start to provide the highest quality early learning opportunities to our most vulnerable children. A piecemeal approach to funding Head Start is not a real solution to this government shutdown.

This GOP majority has slashed funding for education, including Impact Aid. Impact Aid school districts have been harder hit than any other school districts as they struggle to provide quality education for the children of active military and Native American students. Due to the GOP sequester, many of these school districts have been reduced to 4-day school weeks.

This is a reckless and irresponsible way to govern. Our Nation's children and families deserve more, not less.

AMERICA'S VETERANS AND THE SHUTDOWN

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to continue speaking out about the human consequences of this ridiculous government shutdown. We are now one full week into this shameful display of irresponsibility.

Yesterday, I spoke with a man in my district named Joe Burton, who lives in Monmouth, Illinois. He is a decorated war hero, serving 21 years in the military. As a retired Army sergeant, Joe received the Bronze Star for his brave service in the gulf war.

But after honorably serving our Nation for so long, Joe is now worried sick about how this reckless government shutdown is going to impact him and his family. This tough guy is literally frightened about the shutdown and how it is affecting his VA disability payments. If his benefits aren't there and don't arrive, he has no idea how he will pay his bills or even how he will pay for his next meal. More than anything, he just wants to know how veterans like him across the country are going to make ends meet if we don't get this solved.

Let's stop this nonsense now and do right by Joe and the others who have served our country.

NO WAY TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I stand here at a time we should be celebrating the many freedoms bestowed upon us, but I am here in the midst of some Republicans crippling us.

It is fatal for the Congress to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the desires of the American people who want the doors of government open, ending the whirlwinds of piecemeal, cherry-picking funding.

Paraphrasing Martin Luther King: When the architects of our Republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir.

Instead, citizens are sitting at home, waiting for Congress to open the doors

of government because bills are due, mortgage payments, rent, car loans, services are needed. So I request the Republican leadership to end this debate, because the American people are asking Congress to let them get back to work so they can cash their checks.

Mr. Speaker, this is no way to run the government.

ACCESS TO QUALITY CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Instead of approving the Senate-passed funding bill, House Republicans have placed politics before people while important decisions on government funding and the debt ceiling await votes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with excitement to express my support for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which has already significantly improved health care for Americans. In my State of Texas, families have saved \$46.3 million in insurance company refunds. Medicare beneficiaries in the doughnut hole have saved \$420.7 million in prescription drugs. More than 40,000 Americans and 17 million American children with preexisting conditions gained insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act. Because of the health insurance marketplaces, in my district, about 204,000 individuals will have access to quality, affordable health care coverage.

The Affordable Care Act will grow stronger and expand access to quality care for all Americans.

UNDERMINING CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, the last thing Congress needs is more special interest candidates who don't answer to the American people; and yet this morning, the Senate minority leader and his big money allies in the Republican Party once again asked the Supreme Court to give billionaires more influence on public policy through our elections. If this effort succeeds, individuals would be permitted to give as much as \$3.5 million each to candidates and parties next year in addition to the already unlimited amounts they can spend independently.

It should go without saying that the number of people who are able to contribute on this scale is minuscule, but the ranks of those who would be affected by this deluge of money cannot be overstated. It is simply not possible to turn up the volume on the already amplified voices of a few wealthy donors without drowning out the millions of Americans already struggling to be heard.